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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/035,907	12/24/2001	Richard O. Hilson	10011146-1	2166

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AGILENT TECHNOLOGIES, INC.
Legal Department, DL429
Intellectual Property Administration
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EXAMINER

MCKANE, ELIZABETH L

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1744

DATE MAILED: 04/12/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/035,907

Applicant(s)

HILSON ET AL.

Examiner

Leigh McKane

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133).
- Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 25 February 2004.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-16 and 58-81 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☒ Claim(s) 58-61 and 72-81 is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-16 and 62-71 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 119 and 120

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.
- 13) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(e) (to a provisional application) since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.
a) ☐ The translation of the foreign language provisional application has been received.
- 14) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for domestic priority under 35 U.S.C. §§ 120 and/or 121 since a specific reference was included in the first sentence of the specification or in an Application Data Sheet. 37 CFR 1.78.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449) Paper No(s) _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413) Paper No(s). _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

1. The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. Claims 1, 3-6, 8, 15, and 16 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Takagi (U.S. Patent No. 6,248,672).

With respect to claims 1, 5, 6, and 16, Takagi teaches an apparatus for storing a plurality of vertical supports **8** wherein the apparatus includes a mechanism **2** for diffusively introducing pressurized gas into the apparatus, an outlet element having a plurality of openings **37a** in fluid communication with the mechanism, and a holding chamber **1** disposed such that gas flow therethrough is *substantially* unidirectional and *substantially* parallel to the supports, the holding chamber having an opening for removing the supports **8** and a plurality of elements **34,39** for holding the supports. See Figures 11-13. As to the intended use recitation in the preamble, “for storing a plurality of supports having a plurality of chemical compounds/biopolymers bound thereto at individual sites thereon,” a recitation of the intended use of the claimed invention must result in a structural difference between the claimed invention and the prior art in order to patentably distinguish the claimed invention from the prior art. If the prior art structure is capable of performing the intended use, then it meets the claim. See *In re Casey*, 152 USPQ 235 (CCPA 1967) and *In re Otto*, 136 USPQ 458, 459 (CCPA 1963).

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As to claims 3, 4, and 15, the mechanism **2** includes a gas inlet and a manifold comprising one compartment in fluid communication with the gas inlet. The gas inlet is perpendicular to the axis of the openings **37a** in the outlet element.

With respect to claim 8, the apparatus for Takagi is certainly capable of introducing gas at a pressure of 60-80 psi.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

3. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

4. Claims 7, 62, 63, 70, and 71 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Takegi in view of Yamaga et al (U.S. Patent No. 5,484,484).

Takegi is silent with respect to the use of a valve in the gas inlet. Yamaga et al, however, teaches a similar apparatus for processing wafers wherein the gas inlet line **4** includes a valve **V1**. See Figure 2. As valves are known and used in the art for control of gas flow, it would have been obvious to provide a valve in the gas inlet of Takegi.

Allowable Subject Matter

5. Claims 2, 9-14, and 64-69 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim, but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

6. Claims 58-61 and 72-81 are allowed.

Response to Arguments

7. Applicant's arguments filed 25 February 2004 concerning the restriction requirement have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

8. As set forth in the previous office action, claims 40-57 are not combinable with Group I, claims 1-16, because group I is drawn to a storage *apparatus*. Claims 40-57 are drawn to a *method* of storing substrates, grouped with claims 22-28 in Group III. The apparatus as claimed in Group I can be used for a method other than that claimed by applicant. Support for this argument is evidenced in the rejection in the preceding paragraphs, wherein applicants apparatus claims are rejectable by a device used to process silicon wafers.

9. With respect to Applicant's arguments concerning Takegi, the Examiner notes that the claims require only that the gas flow be "*substantially* unidirectional and *substantially* parallel to said supports" (emphasis added). The gas flow in Takegi is indeed substantially unidirectional and substantially parallel.


Conclusion

10. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Leigh McKane whose telephone number is 571-272-1275. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Wednesday (7:15 am-4:45 pm).

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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Robert J. Warden can be reached on 571-272-1275. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).


Leigh McKane
Primary Examiner
Art Unit 1744

elm
5 April 2004